DRAGONAR
ACADEMY
ART BY
RAN
STORY BY
SHIKI MIZUCHI
9

MY CHEST... FEELS SO TIGHT...
WH-WHAT ...?
ムニュ
MMM...
AAAH...
HUH ?!
ECO ?!
MMMM ~!

Chapter XL
Worries and Decisions

Chapter XL
Worries and Decisions

AH...
D-
DON'T
...
OH
...!
MMM
...
NNH
...
E-
ECO
...!
HUFF...
HUFF...

DRAGONAR
ACADEMY
9
ART
RAN
STORY
SHIKI MIZUCHI
CHARACTER DESIGN
KOHADA SHIMESABA

SEVEN SEAS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

DRAGONAR ACADEMY VOLUME 9

art by **RAN** / story by **SHIKI MIZUCHI** / character design by **KOHADA SHIMESABA**

TRANSLATION
Nan Rymer

ADAPTATION
Libby Mitchell

LETTERING AND LAYOUT
Paweł Szczęszek

COVER DESIGN
Nicky Lim

PROOFREADER
Lee Otter

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Lissa Pattillo

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Adam Arnold

PUBLISHER
Jason DeAngelis

DRAGONAR ACADEMY VOL. 9
© Ran 2015, © Shiki Mizuchi 2015
Edited by MEDIA FACTORY.
First published in Japan in 2015 by KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo.
English translation rights reserved by Seven Seas Entertainment, LLC.
under the license from KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo.

No portion of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form without written permission from the copyright holders. This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locals, or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

Seven Seas books may be purchased in bulk for educational, business, or promotional use. For information on bulk purchases, please contact Macmillan Corporate & Premium Sales Department at 1-800-221-7945 (ext 5442) or write specialmarkets@macmillan.com.

Seven Seas and the Seven Seas logo are trademarks of Seven Seas Entertainment, LLC. All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-1-626922-40-2

Printed in Canada

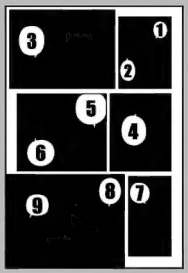
First Printing: February 2016

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

FOLLOW US ONLINE: ***www.gomanga.com***

READING DIRECTIONS

This book reads from ***right to left***, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get the hang of it! Have fun!!



Dragonar Academy
Cast of Characters

Ash Blake

A first-year Senios (upperclassman) at Ansullivan Dragonar Academy. He has the gift of riding any dragon. He's partnered with the young dragon Eco.

Eco

Despite her appearance, Eco is a dragon—and Ash's Steed! She's been learning and displaying all sorts of abilities!

Sylvia Lautreamont

The fourth princess of the Knightdom of Lautreamont. Known as the Ice Blue Princess, she is partnered to the Maestro dragon Lancelot.

Navi

A mysterious entity who guides Eco from the Dragon's Workshop, a shared space constructed by the Holy Dragons long ago. She is the embodiment of the Dragonweiss.

Mirabelle Lautreamont

The third princess of the Knightdom of Lautreamont. Now the headmistress at Ansullivan Dragonar Academy, she's a student of many complex subjects such as mechanical engineering and archaeology.

Cosette Sherry

A maid who serves Sylvia. She tends to appear out of nowhere, and she takes care of Eco and the others.

An Energetic Young Boy

While exploring the forest to achieve a particular goal, he met a curious girl.

A Fearful Young Girl

She ventured into the forest to attain her dreams, but became paralyzed with anxiety.

A Mysterious Woman

?????

DRAGONAR ACADEMY

THE STORY SO FAR

Ansullivan Dragonar Academy: a school for boys and girls who've made pacts with dragons! Ash Blake is a student at the academy, but he's an embarrassment to the school--even though he has a Star Mark (the symbol of his pact), his dragon has yet to be born.

While Ash was participating in the Dragonar Festival of Aries, he was attacked and nearly killed by a man who seemed to be an imperial soldier. With Ash moments away from death, his Steed finally awakens. However, unlike all the other students' Steeds, Ash's dragon, who he names Eco, has the shape of a young human girl.

"YOU ARE NOT MY KEEPER! I AM YOUR KEEPER!!!"

SMILE

Ash and Eco try to settle into daily life together, but their efforts are thwarted when the town is attacked by a Necromancia! Ash, armored by the Ark Eco created for him and wielding the holy blade Aix-les-Bains, is able to counter the Necromancia's assault and protect Ansullivan!

SWOOM

As Eco becomes more feminine by the day, Ash finds himself unable to deny his growing feelings for her. But when he learns that dragons don't innately have distinct genders, he wonders how "female" Eco really is.

In the midst of this turmoil, Navi comes to Ash to deliver a message from the Mother Dragon herself. If Ash wants answers to the questions and doubts plaguing him, he needs to come to Albion Forest!

As the dust settles from the incident with the Dark Dragon King Mordred, summer vacation comes to Ansullivan Dragonar Academy.

During the break, Ash--who has no plans for a visit home--is descended on so aggressively by a swarm of female students that his dorm room is badly damaged! He and Eco wind up staying in Sylvia's quarters while theirs are repaired.

But within minutes of beginning to live together, Eco and Sylvia get into a huge fight over a toy stuffed dragon. The situation escalates to the point that Eco is on the verge of shifting into her dragon form!

DRAGONAR
ACADEMY

CRASH
CUT THAT OUT --!!!
ECO!

HONESTLY, SHE'S HOPELESS!
AND AFTER BEING ALONE IN THE BATH WITH ASH LIKE THAT YESTERDAY ...!

HUFF..
IS... IS SHE ASLEEP ...?
HUFF..
MMMPH ~!
WAKE UP, WILL YOU?!

AND.. WELL, THAT WAS SHOCKING NEWS TO HEAR.
"W-WE'VE BEEN SUMMONED BY THE MOTHER DRAGON ...!"

Your Highness,

I am presently at Castle Fontaine.

I've learned that some of the documents you wished me to look for were destroyed in a fire five years ago. However, they were copies, so I'm currently trying to undercover the location of the original records.
I must ask for your continued patience.

Cosette

I DISPATCHED COSETTE TO LEARN THE NAMES OF ALL THE CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE ORPHAN CEREMONY WHEN I DID, BUT...

I CAN'T SIT BACK AND RELY ON HER TO DO IT ALL.
SINCE IT'S IMPORTANT TO ME, IT'S ONLY RIGHT THAT I TAKE ACTION MYSELF.
GOOD GIRL.
YOU OUGHT TO ACCOMPANY THEM TO THE FOREST.
ECO, WHAT --?!
HEH HEH.
SORRY FOR THAT LITTLE PRANK I PLAYED ON YOU EARLIER.
MY NAME IS NAVI.

I SUPPOSE THIS IS OUR FIRST TIME SPEAKING, HMM?
WELL? WILL YOU GO TO ALBION FOREST FOR YOUR EXAM, TOO?
NAVI...
AS IN THE DRAGON-WEISS THAT ASH WAS TALKING ABOUT?!
.....
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
THE BOY WITH ME HEARD THE MOTHER DRAGON'S VOICE SO CLEARLY, BUT I COULDN'T HEAR HER AT ALL.
WHO WASN'T CHOSEN TO BECOME A DRAGONAR.
THE MOTHER DRAGON ONLY SUMMONED ASH AND ECO!
AND BESIDES, I REMEMBER BEING THAT CHILD OF SEVEN...

SO, WHAT POSSIBLE POINT WOULD THERE BE FOR ME TO GO WITH THEM?
AND YOU'RE ALL RIGHT WITH THAT?
DON'T YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BOY WHO CHANGED YOUR DESTINY?
.....!
W-WELL, I...!
YOU'RE HARD ON YOURSELF, AREN'T YOU...?
TRUE, YOU MAY NOT BE WHAT THE MOTHER DRAGON INTENDED...
BUT EVERY PATH HAS ITS PURPOSE.
BOTH FOR THE KNIGHT OF AVALON...
AND FOR WEAVING THE FUTURE OF ALL DRAGONARS.

THIS IS A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY FOR ME TOO!
I HAVE TO LEARN WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO ME THAT DAY!!
THE FUTURE... OF THE DRAGONARS...?
YOU'RE RIGHT.
HOW COULD I EVEN THINK OF HOLDING BACK, NOW OF ALL TIMES...?!
FOR THE PRIDE OF THE KNIGHTDOM, I TOO MUST STAND TALL.

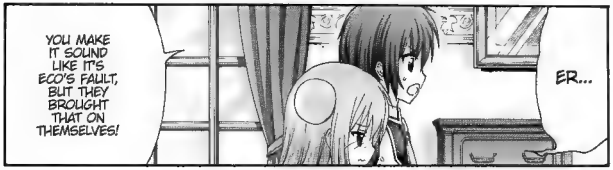
THE NEXT MORNING.
AH.
SO, YOU'VE CHOSEN THE DESTINATION...
FOR YOUR EXAMINATION, HAVE YOU?
YES.
WE'LL BE GOING TO ALBION FOREST.

WELL... IT'S A BIT SURPRISING, ACTUALLY. THE MOTHER DRAGON...
HAS REQUESTED AN AUDIENCE WITH ME AND ECO.
AND YOUR REASONS FOR THAT DECISION?
BE BRIEF. IT'S TIME FOR TEA.
I SEE.
NONCHALANT
IT WILL LET YOU KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE--NOT A BAD IDEA AT ALL.
I SUPPOSE YOU'D BEST GO, THEN, HADN'T YOU?
INCREDIBLE...!

AH, THAT REMINDS ME.
HOW DO YOU PLAN TO TRAVEL TO THE FOREST?
SHE TALKS ABOUT THE MOTHER DRAGON--- THE GREATEST MYSTERY OF THE DRAGON TRIBE--- WITHOUT EVEN BATTING AN EYE?
NO, ESPECIALLY SINCE IT'S STILL DIFFICULT FOR HER TO STAY IN CONTROL.
YOU'RE NOT INTENDING TO HAVE ECO TRANSPORT YOU IN HER DRAGON FORM, ARE YOU?
WELL, IT SEEMS TO ME IT'S JUST AS WELL IF SHE'S IN-COMPETENT.
COME ON, ECO...
HMPH!
WELL, EXCU-UUUSE ME...
FOR BEING INCOM-PETENT.

THAT'S CAUSED NOTHING BUT TROUBLE FOR THE KNIGHT-DOM.
HOW YOU CRUSHED THE EMPIRE'S MASSIVE WARSHIP.

WHA--?!
GRR!
NOW, NOW. SURELY YOU REMEMBER BETTER THAN ANYONE...


YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE IT'S ECO'S FAULT, BUT THEY BROUGHT THAT ON THEMSELVES!
ER...

RE-SEARCH ...?
AND THAT CAUSES ME PROBLEMS TOO, YOU KNOW. SOME OF MY RESEARCH FUNDING WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE CUT AS A RESULT.

WHO'S RIGHT OR WRONG IN THIS SITUATION IS IRRELEVANT, AS ARE THEIR INTENTIONS. THAT'S THE WAY OF THE WORLD.
IT'S MY OPINION THAT OUR ONLY RECOURSE WILL BE TO PAY THEM A VAST SUM IN REPARATIONS.

I BELIEVE WE'VE COVERED EVERY-THING.
TAP TAP
AS FOR YOUR EXAM, I THINK I'LL HAVE YOU BRING BACK A PARTICULAR FLOWER THAT BLOOMS ONLY IN ALBION FOREST, AND ONLY AT THIS TIME OF YEAR.
AH... PRINCESS MIRA-BELLE?
THERE'S SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU, IF IT'S OKAY.
A-ASH!
AM I RIGHT TO THINK YOU CAME TO ANSULLIVAN BECAUSE PRINCESS VERONICA ORDERED YOU TO?
THAT WILL BE ALL.
YOU MAY DEPART FOR YOUR EXAM AS SOON AS YOU PLEASE.
.....
YOU WANT A REX ALBION BLOSSOM?
OH, AND ASH? DO TRY TO KEEP ECO FROM TRANS-FORMING, IF YOU'D BE SO KIND?
VERY GOOD, SYLVIA.

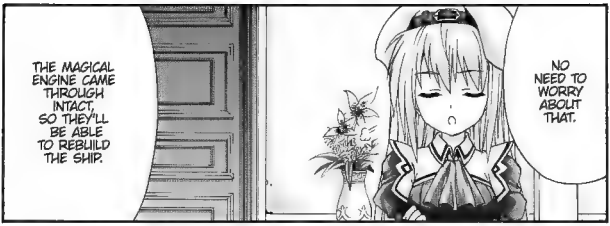
AND THAT SHE WANTED YOU HERE...
SO YOU COULD KEEP AN EYE ON ME AND ECO?!
NONCHALANT
.....
YOU THINK CORRECTLY.
.....
!!
M... MUSCLE-BOUND...
THAT'S WHAT THAT MUSCLE-BOUND IDIOT'S REASONING WAS.
S-SORRY, BUT ARE YOU SAYING...
SHE'S REALLY SOMETHING...
?
DON'T LOOK SO SHOCKED. IT'S THE SIMPLE TRUTH.
YOU DON'T MIND US WANDERING OFF UNSUPERVISED FOR THE EXAM?
I WOULDN'T GO QUITE THAT FAR.

I REALLY COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT VERONICA'S ORDERS.
FOR THE MOST PART, MY REASONS FOR BEING HERE ARE MY OWN.
B... BUT ...!
BUT AS ECO'S MASTER, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN REIN HER IN IF SHE LOSES CONTROL, AREN'T YOU?
I'M TRUSTING YOU TO DO YOUR JOB, THAT'S ALL.
I, UH, PROBABLY SHOULDN'T ASK YOU ABOUT THEM, SHOULD I?
YOUR OWN REASONS ...?
NOW, I'M ABOUT TO BE VERY BUSY.
DIDN'T I ALREADY DISMISS YOU?
CLEVER BOY.

MAYBE EVEN MORE SO THAN WITH VERONICA.
FOR SOME REASON, I'M LITTERLY USELESS WHEN IT COMES TO MIRABELLE.
TH-THAT'S SO RUDE!
SO, YOU'RE SAYING YOU CAN'T STAND UP TO ANY OF YOUR SISTERS, HUH?
YOU'RE AWFULLY BRAVE, ASH.
I WONDER WHAT REALLY BROUGHT HER TO ANSULLIVAN?
I CAN'T SAY FOR SURE, BUT...
I REALLY DIDN'T LIKE HER SAYING SHE THINKS ECO'S IN-COMPETENT, BUT...
I COULDN'T... I DON'T KNOW, I GUESS I JUST DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH HER.
KNOCK IT OFF, GUYS.

I CAN TELL YOU THAT SHE'S A GENUINE SCIENTIST.
BEFORE COMING HERE, SHE WAS STUDYING ABROAD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HOLY LAW.
IT ATTRACTS THE MOST BRILLIANT MINDS IN MANY FIELDS, YOU KNOW.
THAT'S PRETTY IMPRESSIVE!
WOW...
SHE SPECIALIZES IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING AND ARCHAEOLOGY...
WITH A FOCUS ON THE RELICS EXCAVATED FROM ANCIENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES.
Um...
REFRESH MY MEMORY?
AND BY "RELICS," YOU MEAN...?
IT'S A GENERAL TERM FOR THE ANCIENT INSTRUMENTS OF THE ZONO TON CIVILIZATION.
THEY'VE BEEN UNEARTHED AND STUDIED ALL AROUND THE WORLD. THE MILLENNIUM AND VARIOUS MAGICAL VESSEL CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES WERE INSPIRED BY THEM.

WELL, EXCLUUUSE ME FOR THAT, TOO!
POUT
URK! THAT MAKES ME FEEL LIKE I'VE WRONGED HER PRETTY BADLY.
SINCE IT'S BROKEN AND ALL.
MY SISTER WAS ACTUALLY THE ONE WHO DESIGNED THE SILVANUS!


THE MAGICAL ENGINE CAME THROUGH INTACT, SO THEY'LL BE ABLE TO REBUILD THE SHIP.
NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THAT.

ACK ...! SORRY!
NO, THE AMAZING THING IS THAT MY SISTER IS ABLE TO REPAIR THINGS LIKE THAT! OBVIOUSLY!!

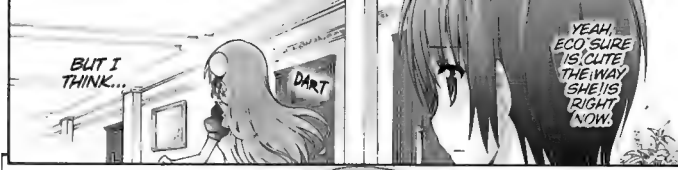
THAT'S GREAT NEWS!
PAT
PAT
RELICS SURE ARE AMAZING ...!

I GUESS I STILL DON'T GET IT.
BUT...

I REALLY COULDN'T SAY. I DO KNOW THAT SHE HAS VERY LITTLE INTEREST IN DRAGONS, SO I DOUBT SHE'D COME ALL THIS WAY BECAUSE OF ECO.
I SURE HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT.
IF SHE'S NOT HERE BECAUSE OF PRINCESS VERONICA'S ORDERS, THEN I'M EVEN MORE CONFUSED ABOUT WHY SHE CAME.
I MEAN, ANSULLIVAN IS DRAGON COUNTRY! IT'S LIKE THE POLAR OPPOSITE OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING OR WHATEVER.
HMPH!
SO, WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS...
NO ONE CARES ABOUT AN INCOMPETENT DRAGON LIKE ME!
ECO...
OH, GET OVER YOURSELF!
YOUR PESSIMISM IS REALLY GETTING ON MY NERVES!!
JUST SNAP OUT OF IT AND TOUGHEN UP!!
WHAT WAS THAT ?!
.....!

I-I'LL LET IT GO THIS TIME.
?!
CLANK
OH!
?
TH-THERE ARE LIMITS TO HOW WEIRD SHE CAN ACT, ASH!
I WAS DELIBERATELY BEING A BIT PROVOKING, BUT..
YEAH, I KNOW.
AFTER WHAT HAP-PENED IN THE BATH YESTERDAY, 'ECO FELL \\\BACK TO SLEEP. ONCE NAVI LEFT HER BODY.
BUT THIS MORNING, WHEN I FILLED HER IN ON WHAT HAD HAPPENED, IT DIDN'T CHANGE HER MOOD AT ALL--AS YOU CAN SEE.
!
UM... ASH? ABOUT YESTER-DAY...
THTHMP
Y-YEAH ...?
SHY

BLUSH
IN...
IN THE BATH...
DID YOU...
SEE ME NAKED ...?
HUH ?!
N-NOPE!
FLUSTERED
TOO MUCH STEAM! I DIDN'T SEE A THING!!
OH! THAT'S ALL RIGHT, THEN.
EHEH...
.....


BUT I THINK...
DART
YEAH, ECO SURE IS CUTE THE WAY SHE IS RIGHT NOW.

WITHOUT THIS CONSTANT SHADOW OF GLOOM HANGING OVER HER.
I'D RATHER SHE WENT BACK TO HER OLD SELF...

IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE...
ALBION.
THE FOREST ABBEY.
OH...! OH, WHAT COULD THIS MEAN?
THE MOTHER DRAGON HERSELF HANDED DOWN AN ORACLE!

SOMETHING TREMENDOUSLY IMPORTANT...
MUST BE ABOUT TO HAPPEN HERE, MUSTN'T IT?

MY ARM FEELS LIKE IT'S BURNING UP!
IT'S... SO HOT...!
Chapter XLI
Ash's Memories: Part 1
WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME WITH THAT SAD EXPRESSION ...?
WHO ARE YOU...?
DRIP
HUH?
ECO ...?
PRINCESS?
WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON?!

AH --?!!
ボタ
SPURT
ボタ
SPURT
ボタ
SPURT
GAAAAAAHHHH!!!

H-HEY!
ARE YOU OKAY, ASH?
LURCH
GAH --!!
PRIN-CESS... ECO...
I-I WAS...
YOU FELL ASLEEP AFTER WE TOOK OFF.
A DREAM ...?
HUFF
HUFF
I SEE.
CLENCH
MY... MY LEFT ARM...
HA HA... OF COURSE THAT'S ALL IT WAS.

MAYBE IT'S JUST THE EXHAUSTION FROM THE WRITTEN EXAM CATCHING UP WITH ME.
WHAT A NIGHT-MARE!
YEAH.
SO, YOU'RE ALL RIGHT?
GOOD GRIEF. I KNOW WE'RE RIDING TOGETHER, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN SLACK OFF.
THE ALBION FOREST...
AND THE ABBEY THAT SHARES ITS NAME.
ANYWAY, WE'RE HERE!

SHY...
I CAN DISMOUNT ON MY OWN.
IT'S OKAY.
.....
STARE
YEAH, BUT YOU DON'T NEED TO.
I'LL CATCH YOU.

NAH, DON'T WORRY. THIS IS NOTHING.
BUT I THOUGHT YOU WERE AWFULLY TIRED.

GOTCHA!
CATCH

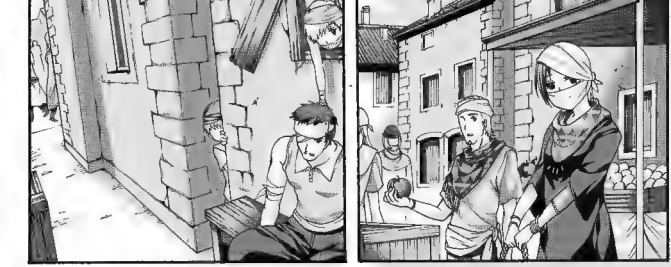
E-EXCUSE ME?
HMM?
WHAT IS IT?
HMM? WHAT'S WRONG, PRINCESS?
N-NOTHING AT ALL!!
I-I ASSUME FROM YOUR APPEARANCE THAT YOU'RE A...A DRAGONAR...
BUT, WELL, THIS IS SACRED GROUND, SO Y-YOU CAN'T WALK ON IT WITHOUT SPECIAL DISPENSATION...!
SEEING AS I'M A KNIGHT...
I'M OBVIOUSLY ENTIRELY CAPABLE OF DISMOUNTING UNAIDED!
UM...
ER...

WE'RE HERE WITH THE PERMISSION OF ANSULLIVAN DRAGONAR ACADEMY'S HEADMISTRESS.
I AM SYLVIA LAUTREAMONT, FOURTH PRINCESS OF THE KNIGHTDOM.
A CHILD ...?
WAIT, WE'RE NOT HERE TO CAUSE TROUBLE OR ANYTHING---
YEAH, SHE'S RIGHT! WE'RE HERE FOR EDUCATIONAL REASONS.
AH... THERE'S NO NEED TO PROSTRATE YOURSELF.
PLEASE FORGIVE MY IGNORANCE!
BOW
I...I AM KURAE! I SERVE AS A PRIESTESS AT THE ABBEY!
JUMP
PR ...!
PRINCESS ?!!

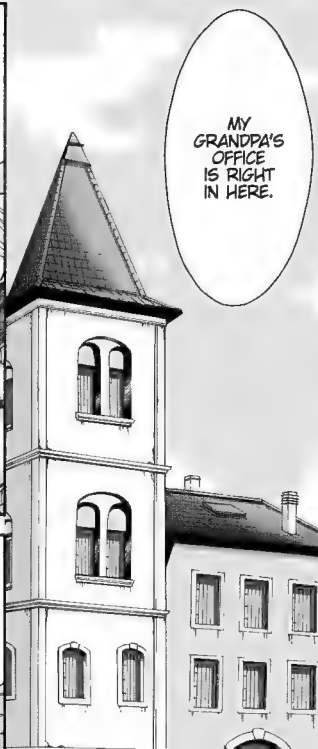
AHHH...! THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS.
TEARY
A PRIESTESS, HUH? YOU SAID YOUR NAME'S KURAE?
YES! AND YOU ARE...?
ASH BLAKE.
I'M A DRAGO-NAR.
SWEEPISH
ER, NO. THAT'S THE PRINCESS'S DRAGON.
BUT THEN WHERE MIGHT YOUR STEED BE...?
OH --!
GLANCE
TURN
WELL, ACTU-ALLY...
THEN THAT MAJESTIC MAESTRO...
MUST BE YOUR STEED!

YOU'RE HIS STEED?!
YOU DO HAVE HORNS --!
SO...SO, DOES THAT MEAN THAT YOU'RE...
THE YOUNG DRAGON ECO?!
YOU KNOW WHO SHE IS --?!
YES!
THE OTHER DAY, I RECEIVED AN ORACLE FROM THE MOTHER DRAGON!
IT SAID THAT ECO, THE SCION OF THE IMPERIAL HOUSE OF THE HOLY DRAGONS, WOULD SOON COME HERE WITH HER MASTER!

WHAT?! IS HE ALL RIGHT?!
NATURALLY! HE'S THE HEAD OF THE CHIVALRIC ORDER OF THE ALBION FOREST ABBEY!
WHICH MEANS HE'S VERY IMPORTANT!
AN ORACLE? WELL, THAT EXPLAINS IT!
IT'S THE VERY FIRST ORACLE SHE'S GIVEN US IN 500 YEARS! IT WAS SUCH A SHOCK THAT MY GRANDPA HAD A SEIZURE!
OF COURSE! I'LL TAKE YOU TO HIM RIGHT AWAY.
THE HEAD OF THE ORDER...
IN WHICH CASE, WE'D LIKE TO RUN SOME THINGS BY HIM.
PLEASE FOLLOW ME!
YOU ARE WELCOME IN THE SACRED GROUNDS OF ALBION!!



I AM CATHBAD, HEAD OF THE CHIVALRIC ORDER OF THE ALBION FOREST ABBEY.
WELCOME, ALL OF YOU.


MY GRANDPA'S OFFICE IS RIGHT IN HERE.

AS YOU CAN SEE, I'M BUT AN OLD MAN. YOU MAY CALL ME "GRAND-FATHER" IF YOU WISH.
WOW, HE'S ANCIENT ...!
SO HE'S THE LEADER?

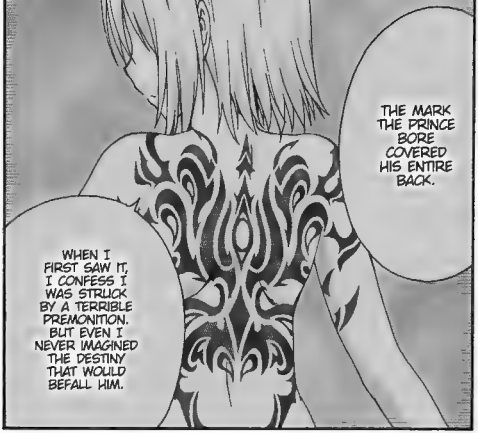
NEVER WILL I FORGET THE DAY YOU SAFELY RETURNED FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE FOREST, BEARING AN ORPHAN.
THANK YOU SO MUCH... GRAND-FATHER.
AH, YOUR HIGH-NESS!
YOU'VE GROWN UP SO SPLEN-DIDLY.
AND YOU, YOUNG MAN. MIGHT YOU BE ECO'S --?
I'M DRAGONAR ASH BLAKE, SIR.
MY LEFT ARM ...?
TSUMP
"ASH"...? NOW, WHERE HAVE I HEARD THAT NAME BEFORE?
TELL ME, MIGHT YOU BEAR AN INTRIGUING STAR MARK ON YOUR LEFT ARM?

AH! YES, THE VERY ONE!
I RE-MEMBER THAT STAR MARK WELL!

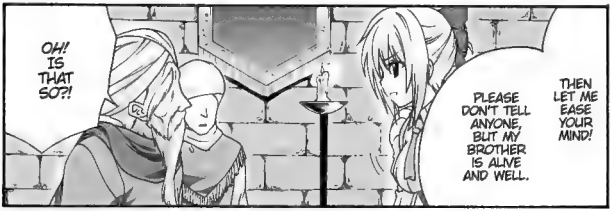
WHAT'S THE MATTER, ASH?
IT'S NOTHING.
I STILL CAN'T QUITE SHAKE THAT NIGHT-MARE.
FWIP

THEN... COULD I ASK YOU...
DO YOU REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT WHEN I TOOK PART IN THE ORPHAN CEREMONY?! MY MEMORY OF IT IS COMPLETELY MISSING!

HMM... I'M TERRIBLY SORRY, BUT YOUR STAR MARK IS ALL I RECALL.
IT'S AS PECULIAR AND DISTINCTIVE AS PRINCE JULIUS' MARK--MOST UNUSUAL!


THE MARK THE PRINCE BORE COVERED HIS ENTIRE BACK.
WHEN I FIRST SAW IT, I CONFESS I WAS STRUCK BY A TERRIBLE PREMONITION. BUT EVEN I NEVER IMAGINED THE DESTINY THAT WOULD BEFALL HIM.

WAIT-- YOU'VE SEEN MY BROTHER'S STAR MARK?!
YES, INDEED.


OH! IS THAT SO?!
PLEASE DON'T TELL ANYONE, BUT MY BROTHER IS ALIVE AND WELL.
THEN LET ME EASE YOUR MIND!

GLANCE
DESTINY, HUH?
HOW WONDER-FUL!
SO THE PRINCE OVERCAME THE FATE THAT THREATENED HIM...!

AND HE TRIUMPHED OVER IT.
THE PRINCE FOUGHT HIS DESTINY FOR THE KNIGHTDOM...
ARE BOTH ROYALTY OF THE DRAGON TRIBE.
AND ECO, MY STEED...
PRINCE JULIUS' STEED, MORDRED...
WHAT MY DESTINY IS...?
BUT I WONDER...
ALL I WANT IS TO BRING ECO BACK TO HER USUAL SELF--ALL ENERGY AND CONFIDENCE.
BUT I CAN'T EVEN DO THAT.
WHAT GOOD CAN IT DO FOR SOMEONE LIKE ME TO MEET THE MOTHER DRAGON?
.....?!
LOLLING

MY STAR MARK'S ACHING! WHY?!
THROB
AND, MY HEAD HURTS SO BADLY LIKE IT'S GOING TO EXPLODE!!!
!!
RAISE
.....!!
.....!
THROB
THROB
THROB
.....!!

IT SO HAPPENS THAT THE ORPHAN CEREMONY WILL NOT TAKE PLACE TOMORROW.
IF YOU WISH TO ENTER THE FOREST THEN, I HAVE NO OBJECTION.
OH, THAT'S WONDERFUL! THANK YOU!
ASH ...?
?
TOPPLE
WH-WHAT?

ASH ?!
ASH --!!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?!
ASH!
ASH ...!
!

Ash.
.....
WHO COULD IT BE ...?
I FEEL LIKE I'VE HEARD IT BEFORE...
Ash Blake.
THERE'S A VOICE!.. CALLING OUT TO ME...

CAW
CAW
I'M... IN THE FOREST?
HUH ...?
WHAT THE HECK AM I DOING...?
OW!
.....!

I REMEMBER! I SAW THIS LITTLE GUY CAUGHT ON A BUSH, AND I FELL DOWN THAT CLIFF WHEN I TRIED TO GRAB HIM.
A STUFFED ANIMAL ...?
OH, RIGHT!

HUH? THAT'S WEIRD.
I FEEL LIKE I WAS DOING SOMETHING ELSE... LIKE I WAS SOMEWHERE ELSE.

GUESS I MUST'VE HIT MY HEAD.
OW, OW, OW!
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ORPHAN CEREMONY, OF ALL TIMES...

I'M NOT EVEN INTERESTED, BUT EVERYONE AT HOME SURE HAD TO MAKE A BIG DEAL ABOUT IT! WHY'S IT SO IMPORTANT TO THEM THAT I PULL THIS OFF?!
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
SO, I TURNED SEVEN! BIG DEAL! WHY DOES THAT MEAN I HAVE TO GET DUMPED IN THE WOODS FOR SOME RITUAL?!

MAYBE I HIT MY HEAD REALLY HARD?
THIS WHOLE THING'S RIDICULOUS ANYWAY!

NO WAY THE MAMA DRAGON OR WHATEVER'S GONNA GIVE ME A DRAGON!
I MEAN, IT'S ME. RESPONSIBILITY'S NOT MY STRONG POINT.
SNIFFLE...

SNIFFLE...
SOB...
HUH?
SOME-BODY THERE ...?
A GIRL ...?
.....

HER HAIR'S SO PRETTY...

WELL, I DID FIND THIS THING JUST LYING AROUND...
Wow, it's got a weird-looking face.
GUESS IT MAKES SENSE FOR THAT GIRL TO BE HERE TOO IF SHE'S MY AGE, HUH?

AND HER DRESS IS TOO.
GUESS SHE'S FROM A RICH FAMILY?

ARE YOU, UM, OKAY ...?
UH... HEY.

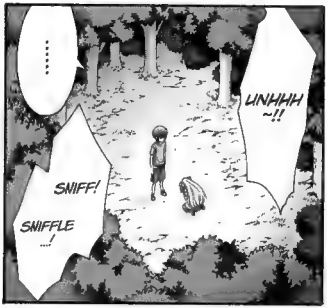
SNIFFLE...
URK!
AND SHE'S CRYING, ISN'T SHE? CRAP!

TURN!
GLANCE

GO AWAY !!!
WHAM
HEY! ARE YOU ALL RI--
GACK?!
SNUF-FLE..
HIC...
HEY --?
SNIF-FLE..
SNORT..

W-WOULDN'T WANT ANYONE TO SEE HER CRYING--!
A WOMAN WHO'S GOING TO BECOME A KNIGHT...
SNIFFLE...
WHAT WAS THAT FOR?!
OBVIOUSLY, I DON'T WANT ANYONE TO SEE ME LIKE THIS!
UHH ...!
HIC!
HIC...
?!
TEARY...
C'MON, STOP THAT! YOU DON'T HAVE TO HOLD IT ALL IN!
.....

W-W-WAAAA...
WAAAAAAAH!


UNHHH~!!
.....
SNIFF!
SNIFFLE....

Y-YES!
DID YOU GET LOST OR SOMETHING?
SO, YOU CAN'T FIND THE MAMA DRAGON?
R-RIGHT!

UGH, THIS SUCKS! WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO NOW?
I'M FROM A TINY VILLAGE! THERE AREN'T ANY GIRLS MY AGE...
MAYBE IF I THINK ABOUT MY LITTLE SISTER...
ARE... ARE YOU SCARED?
.....
.....!
I KNOW!!
GET REAL.
SOME WEIRD STUFFED ANIMAL ISN'T GONNA CUT IT.
SO USE-LESS...
DANGLE
SNIF-FLE...
HIC...
HERE! MAYBE THIS LITTLE GUY'LL MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER!
UM, HEY!
I CAN GIVE IT A TRY, ANYWAY!
YANK

.....!

HUH? I FELL OVER IT, BASICALLY. I GUESS.

WH-WHERE DID YOU FIND THIS?!
SNATCH

STUPID!
YOU'RE SO STUPID!!
HANG ON-- IS THAT THING YOURS?
But of course I'm the one who fell down.
IT WAS SNAGGED RIGHT AT THE EDGE OF A CLIFF, SO...
YOU FELL OFF A CLIFF FOR A TOY?!
WHAT IF THAT KEPT YOUR DREAM FROM COMING TRUE?!
UH... MY DREAM?
OF COURSE!
EVERYONE IN THE KNIGHTDOM HAS THE SAME DREAM!
EVERYONE WANTS TO HAVE A STEED AND BE A DRAGONAR !!!
POINT

D'OOF!
UM... WHAT'S A "STEED" AGAIN?
CASE CLOSED!
.....

HOW CAN YOU BE FROM THE KNIGHTDOM AND NOT KNOW?!
WAAAAH!!
YOU --!

BUT YOU KNOW WHAT DRAGONS ARE, DON'T YOU? AREN'T YOU DYING FOR A GLIMPSE OF THE MOTHER OF ALL DRAGONS?!
WELL, YEAH, I GUESS, BUT...

WHAP
OW! OW! I'M FROM A BACK-WATER VILLAGE!
WHAP
NO ONE EXPLAINED ANYTHING TO ME!

DESTINY ...?
THEN HURRY UP AND GO!
Tweet
MAYBE YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR DESTINY IS, BUT I BET IT'S WAITING FOR YOU ANYWAY!
I TWISTED SOME-THING! I'LL NEVER MAKE IT!
BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU?
GOTCHA.
WELL, HOP ON.
CROUCH
HUH ?!
I'LL GET YOU OUT OF THE FOREST.

ARE...
ARE YOU TELLING ME TO JUST GIVE UP?!
WELL, YEAH!
YOU'RE A KID IN THE WOODS, AND YOU'RE HURT! DO YOU WANNA END UP *DYING* IN HERE?!
NO!
BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU?! WHAT'LL *YOU* DO?!
!!
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS!
I'LL GET YOU OUT, AND THEN I'M GOING HOME!

WHY DON'T YOU GET IT...?
STAND
WHY...WHY DON'T YOU WANT TO BE PARTNERED WITH A DRAGON...?
YOU...
!!
HEY! LOOK OUT!
THERE'S...
THERE'S SOME-THING BEHIND YOU!!!
HUH ...?!

GRAAAAH!
A BASI-LISK !!!

Chapter XLII
Ash's Memories: Part 2
WHAT?!
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, ASH VANISHED FROM HIS ROOM?!
I WENT UP TO CHECK ON HIM AS SOON AS I ARRIVED AT THE INN, BUT...
HE WASN'T RESTING IN THERE LIKE HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN!

FIRST HE COLLAPSED YESTERDAY, AND NOW HE VANISHES... WHAT'S GOING ON?
THE MEMBERS OF THE CHIVALRIC ORDER ARE OUT LOOKING FOR HIM, BUT...

I TOLD YOU WE SHOULDN'T SLEEP IN SEPARATE ROOMS!
WE HAD NO CHOICE! THE ABBEY'S INN REQUIRES MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITE SEX TO SLEEP APART!

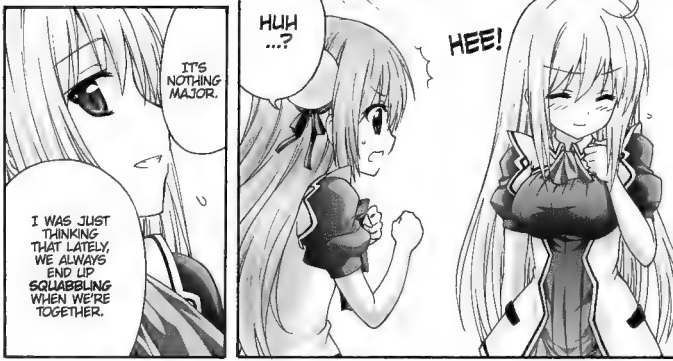
HUH?! I-I'VE NEVER REALLY TRIED DOING THAT FROM MY END, BUT...
I'LL GIVE IT A GO!

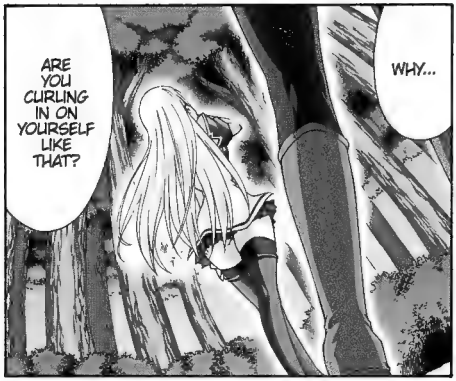
OH! ECO!
CAN YOU FIND HIM WITH YOUR CONNECTION THROUGH THE ASTRAL FLOW?

VWOOOM...
!!
WH-WHAT'LL WE DO?
ARE YOU SAYING HE WENT THERE ALONE...?
WHAT ?!
HE HEADED FOR ALBION FOREST!
TURN
THE FOREST ...!

THERE'S ONLY ONE THING WE CAN DO.
WE'LL...
FOLLOW HIM INTO THE FOREST.
I'VE NEVER BEEN HERE BEFORE.
I DIDN'T THINK IT'D BE THIS QUIET...
SAY, YOU'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE, RIGHT?
FLINCH
W-WARN ME BEFORE TOUCHING ME!
YOU SCARED ME!!

I'M HERE TO...
FIGURE OUT WHAT'S BEEN HIDING IN MY MEMORIES FOR SO LONG.
DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN FIND MOTHER IN THAT STATE...?
BE QUIET!
WHAT ABOUT YOU!?! WHY'D YOU DRAG THAT STUFFED ANIMAL HERE?!
GIVE IT BACK!!
SO WHAT IF I CHOSE TO BRING IT?!
HUH --?!
I LOVE IT, REMEMBER?!
WHY, YOU ...!
WHAT ?!


HEE!
HUH ...?
IT'S NOTHING MAJOR.
I WAS JUST THINKING THAT LATELY, WE ALWAYS END UP SQUABBLING WHEN WE'RE TOGETHER.


WHY...
ARE YOU CURLING IN ON YOURSELF LIKE THAT?

.....
BRUSH
WHAT'S WITH HER?
SHEESH.

YOU'RE THE IMPERIAL PRINCESS, AREN'T YOU?
.....

I DON'T REMEMBER IT CLEARLY...
BUT I DO KNOW THAT, LONG AGO, RIGHT HERE...

THAT BOY AND I SAW SOMETHING.
I THINK THAT MADE MY FEELINGS EVEN STRONGER.

DRAGONS ARE...
WHAT I TAKE MOST PRIDE IN.
AND NOT JUST BECAUSE I WAS BORN IN THE KNIGHTDOM!

I'M NO DIFFERENT THAN ASH.
NOT BEING ABLE TO REMEMBER SOMETHING THAT'S SUPPOSEDLY SO IMPORTANT TO ME IS PATHETIC, ISN'T IT?

DID... DID YOU SEE A DRAGON? DO YOU MEAN MOTHER?
MAYBE SO.

WHEN I WAS BORN, I...I DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT MYSELF.
SAME HERE.

I SUPPOSE, IN SOME SMALL WAYS...
MAYBE WE'RE ALL A TINY BIT ALIKE, HUH?

EVEN USING THE DRAGONWEISS DIDN'T TELL ME ANYTHING.
IT MADE ME SO ANXIOUS...

I GUESS SO, IF YOU MEAN WE'RE A LITTLE FOOLISH...
WHO ARE YOU CALLING FOOLISH?
DUMMY.
H-HUH?! I NEVER SAID ANYTHING ABOUT BEING FOOLISH... UM...!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. WE'LL KEEP THIS BETWEEN THE TWO OF US.
HEH HEH!
I THOUGHT SHE DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO BE ANYTHING BUT HARD-HEADED.
BUT SHE'S GOT HER GOOD POINTS, TOO, DOESN'T SHE?
SYLVIA ...?

DO YOU THINK...
THE MOTHER DRAGON WOULD BE LIKE MY MOTHER...?
.....
I'M SURE SHE WOULD BE!
SHE'S THE GRACIOUS MOTHER OF ALL DRAGONS!
IF SHE'S MY MOTHER...
I WONDER IF SHE'D BE WILLING TO LISTEN TO MY PROBLEMS, TOO.
SHF
SHF

?!
WHOOOSH
GLOWER
ECO !!!
FWOOOOSH

SYLVIA --!
WHAT'S HAPPENING?!
THIS CAN'T BE...!
HOW IS IT POSSIBLE?!
SNARL
グルル
THESE THINGS... ARE NECROMANCIA MADE OF YOUNG DRAGONS ...!
BUT...
HOW CAN THEY BE IN ALBION FOREST, OF ALL PLACES?!

RUN! WE'VE GOT TO GET AWAY!!
DASH
HURRY AND CALL LANCE-LOT!!
I CAN'T! THE FOREST IS SATURATED WITH THE MOTHER'S MAGIC!
IT MEANS DRAGONARS CAN'T BRING THEIR STEEDS INSIDE!
THAT MAKES NO SENSE! I'M A STEED, SO HOW --?!
IT'S DIFFERENT IF THE MOTHER SUMMONED YOU PER-SONALLY!
GAH!
LURCH
THEY'RE OVER HERE, TOO...!!!

RUN, ECO!
I'LL DISTRACT THEM SO YOU CAN GET AWAY!
EX-CUSE ME?!
I CAN FIGHT, TOO!
YOU AND ASH ARE...
THE ONES THE MOTHER SUM-MONED!
FOR ALL WE KNOW...
SHE WON'T EVEN APPEAR IF I'M HERE!
WHAT'S WITH THAT?!
I'D SAY YOU'RE BEING ALL TIMID, TOO!

ECO...
GET IT TOGETH-ER!
I WILL NOT!
GET OUT OF HERE! IF YOU DON'T--
DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU'D BECOME PALADIN SOMEDAY?!
ECO !!
WRAP
AH ...!

!!!!
DRAG
EEEEEEEK!!
JINGLE...

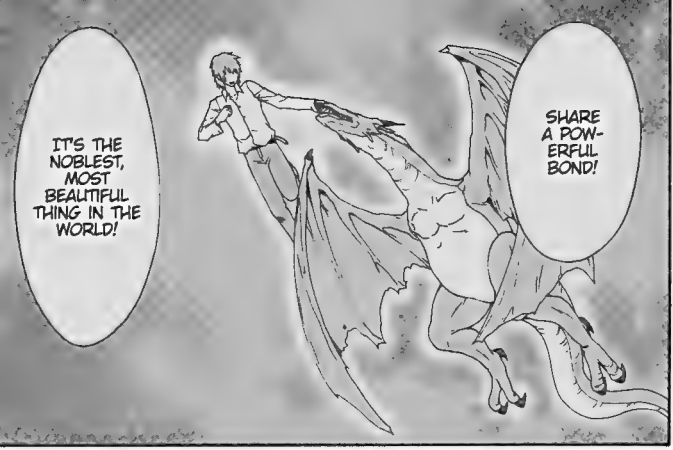
CLOM
CLOM
WHEW!

QUIVER
QUIVER
!!
!

HUFF!
HUFF!
THAT DARN BASILISK... FINALLY GAVE UP AND LEFT...
PHEW! I FIGURED WE WERE DEAD MEAT.

HEY, C'MON. WE'RE OKAY NOW!

I-I KNOW, OKAY?!
FLINCH
WOW, YOU'RE...
A REAL FRAIDY-CAT, AREN'T YOU?
YOU'RE LOSING YOUR NERVE, SO YOU'RE NOT FEELING UP TO THIS---
Q-QUIET!
WHAT WOULD YOU KNOW ...?!
DRAGONS ARE BARELY ANY SMARTER THAN THAT BASILISK THING!
SO, WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT THEM? WHY DO YOU WANT TO HAVE ONE FOR A PARTNER?
YOU'RE WRONG!
DRAGONS ARE...
NO, DRAGONS AND HUMANS ...


IT'S THE NOBLEST, MOST BEAUTIFUL THING IN THE WORLD!
SHARE A POWERFUL BOND!

YOU'RE NOT WRONG, EITHER.
BUT...

A BOND?
BETWEEN A DRAGON AND...?

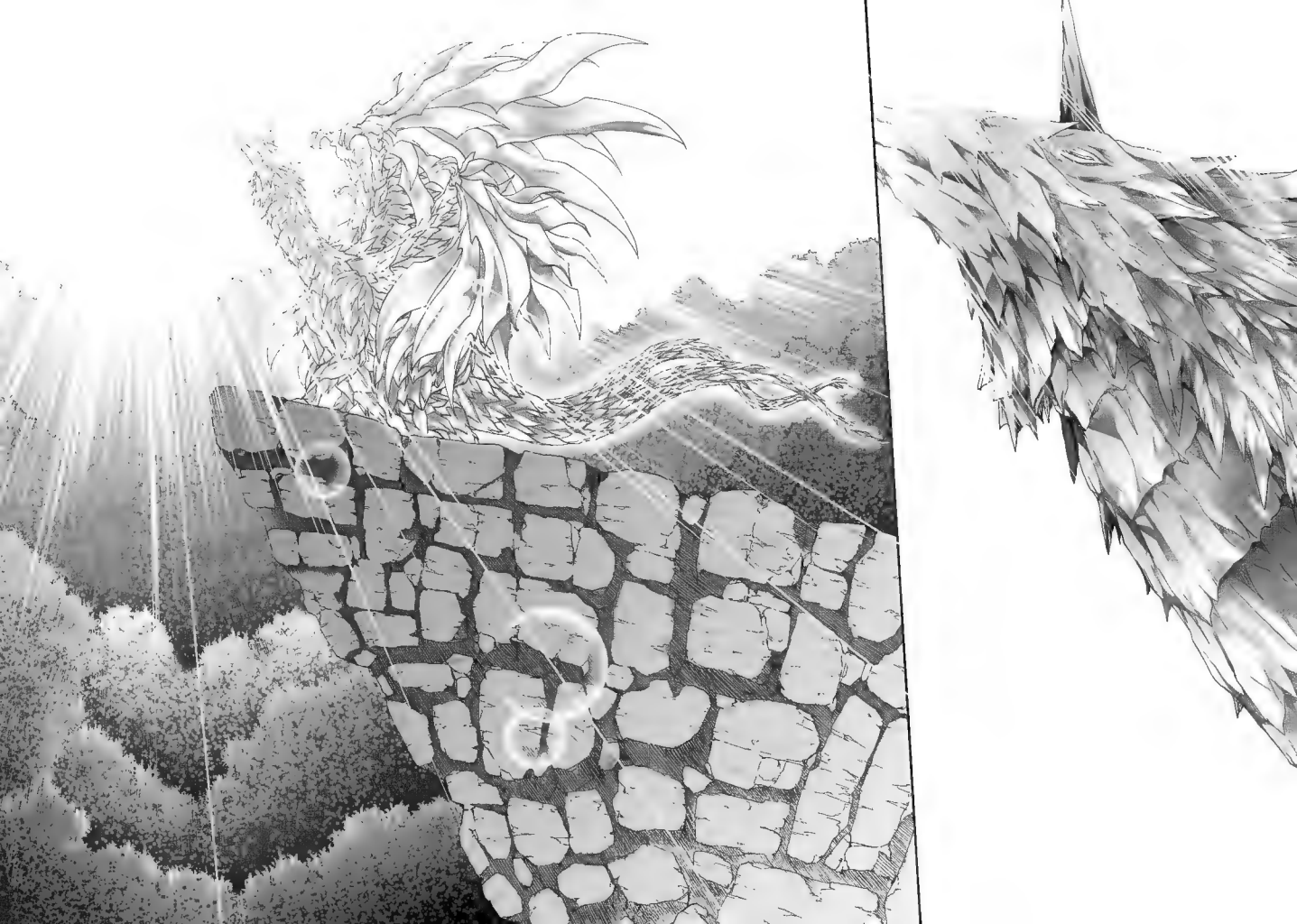
I'VE NEVER SEEN THE WORLD FROM A DRAGON'S BACK, OR FELT THAT BOND...
I'M STILL SMALL, SO I'VE NEVER EVEN BEEN ALLOWED NEAR A DRAGON.
CLENCH

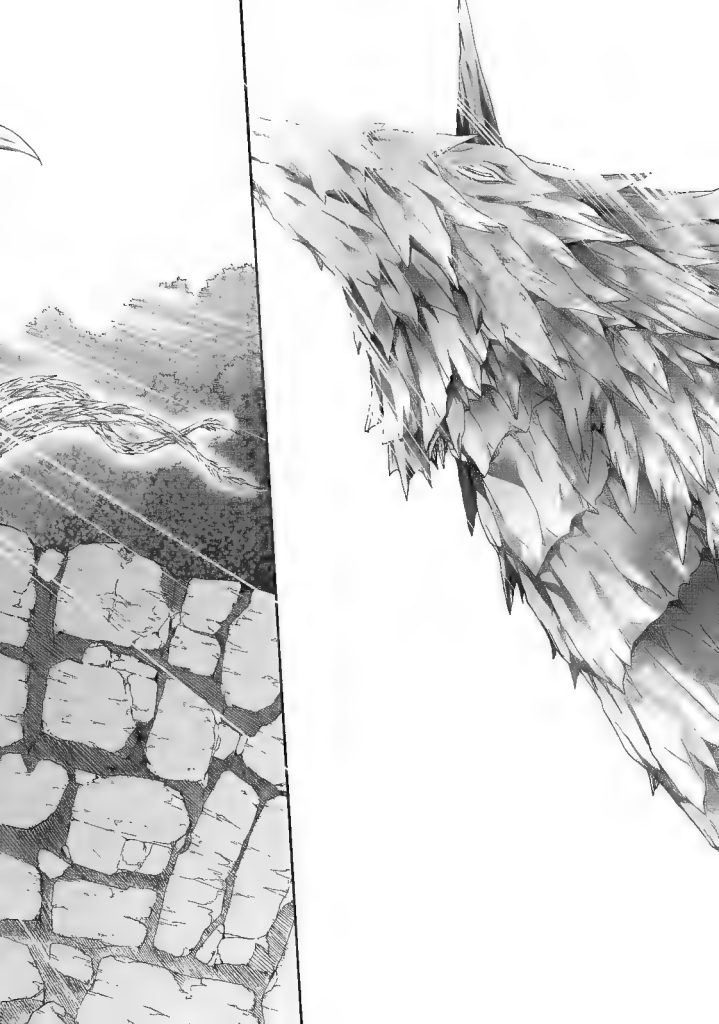
I JUST WANT TO FINALLY KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE-- HOW IT FEELS!!
AND IT'S SO FRUS-TRATING!

SHH!
LOOK UP THERE.
!

HM?
HEY, ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING TO ME?!
I'M POURING MY HEART OUT HERE!
...!

HUH?!
WAAA-AAY...
OVER THERE...
IT'S A DRAGON...!
I-I'VE NEVER SEEN ONE BEFORE!





WOW, ITS FACE ...!
IT SEEMS LIKE ITS SOUL IS DEEPER THAN A HUMAN'S.
SCALES THAT REFLECT RAINBOW LIGHT...
FOUR POWER-FUL WINGS...
IT REALLY IS AMAZING!
I'VE NEVER SEEN A DRAGON LIKE THAT EITHER.

WHOA.
DRAG-
ONS...
RROOOAAARR
REALLY
ARE...
INCREDI-
BLE.
...!

YEAH, THEY ARE!

LISTEN.
I STILL THINK IT'LL BE DANGEROUS, BUT...
I ALSO THINK SHE NEEDS TO HEAR HOW MUCH YOU WANT TO HAVE A STEED.
WANNA GO FIND THE MOTHER?
.....!!
REALLY?!
ALL RIGHT!! THEN I'LL TRY TO DO IT ON MY OWN TWO FEET!
STAGGER
Oof!
HANG ON.
I CAN PIGGYBACK YOU A WHILE LONGER.

YOU'VE NEVER RIDDEN A DRAGON... RIGHT?
SO, LET'S PRAC-TICE! FOR NOW...
I'LL BE YOUR STEED!

OH...
ALL RIGHT.

Can you sense that...
This is your true memory?
What...
A marvelous expression you have...
Ash Blake.
But now...
I have no choice but to show you more.

Hap-
pened
to you
next...
And
what...
Is a
deeply...
Painful
memory.

DRAGONAR
ACADEMY

Chapter XLIII
Ash's Memories: Part 3
JINGLE...
THERE IT IS AGAIN!
I KEEP HEARING THAT SOUND...!

I'VE HEARD IT THREE TIMES NOW.
IT'S A REALLY PRETTY SOUND--WELL, NO. IT'S MORE LIKE...SOME KIND OF WAVE THAN A SOUND.

RUSTLE
SOUND ...?
ALL I CAN HEAR IS THE TREES RUSTLING.

OH!
MAYBE IT'S THE MOTHER DRAGON CALLING TO YOU!
HUH? SERI-OUSLY?!

OH!
A WAVE ...?
IS IT POSSI-BLE...

I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT HER VOICE DOESN'T SOUND LIKE A "REAL" VOICE.
IT'S MORE LIKE... A WAVE OF SOUND FOR THE CHILDREN WHO HEAR HER!

REALLY?! SO, WE DID IT!
.....
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
WHY DON'T YOU LOOK HAPPY?
BE-CAUSE...
I CAN'T...
HEAR WHAT YOU'RE HEAR-ING.
WHAT ...?
I'M SAYING THAT...
THE MOTHER DRAG-ON...
IS CALLING FOR YOU...
BUT NOT FOR ME.

YOU IDIOT!
IT'S NOT SET IN STONE YET, IS IT?!
DON'T GIVE IN SO EASILY!!

UNH ...!

Y... YEAH.
FADE

EVEN I CAN TELL HOW BADLY YOU WANT THIS!
SO, IF THE MOTHER DRAGON LEARNS HOW YOU FEEL, I BET SHE'LL CHOOSE YOU, TOO!!

HUH ?!
.....!

WHAT JUST HAPPENED TO US?
THIS ISN'T THE FOREST! HOW'D WE GET HERE...?

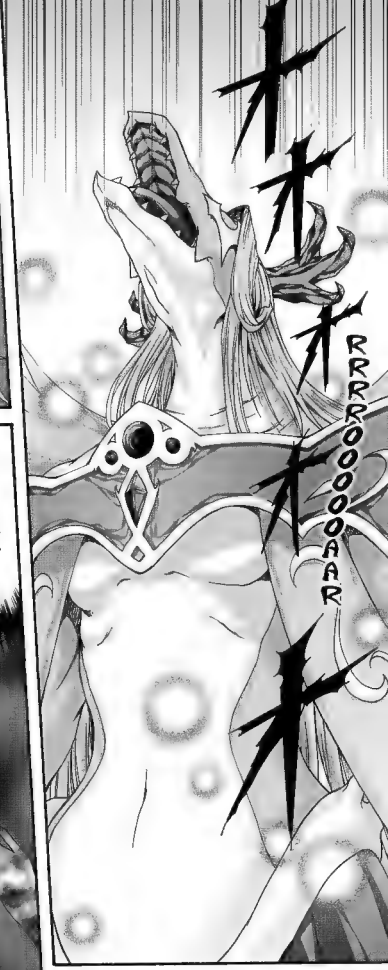
!
JINGLE...

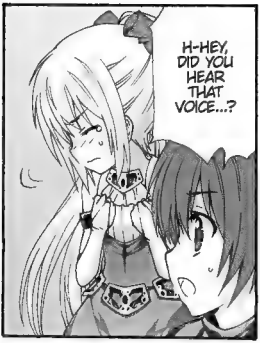
IS THIS... SOME KIND OF SHRINE?
WHERE THE HECK ARE WE?

IS THAT... THE MOTHER DRAGON ...?
IS...
I DON'T SEE ANY-THING...
WHERE YOU'RE POINT-ING!
WH-WHAT? THE MOTHER? WHERE ...?
THERE!
RIGHT THERE! AT THE BACK OF THE CAVE!
BUT WHY NOT ...?
GLOW
GLOW

!!

Ash Blake of Alba Village...
I bestow an Orphan upon you.


RRRROOOOOAAR


H-HEY, DID YOU HEAR THAT VOICE...?

WAIT! PLEASE WAIT!
MOTHER! I'M JUST FINE THE WAY I AM!
I'M ONLY HERE BECAUSE I WANTED YOU TO MEET THIS GIRL!

But you were the only one chosen, Ash Blake.
WH --?!

DID YOU EVEN LOOK AT US?!
THAT'S NON-SENSE!
I'M NOT THE ONE HERE WHO REALLY WANTS AN ORPHAN! IT'S HER!

SEE ?!
WHA ...? HEY!
SHOVE
BUT... BUT I CAN'T EVEN SEE HER!
DON'T WORRY! SHE'S RIGHT THERE!

MOTHER DRAGON, PLEASE!
PLEASE, GIVE HER THE ORPHAN INSTEAD!
This little one here is the last dragon destined to be born this day.
And it is your destiny...

To receive it!!
FWOOOOM
NGH --?!!
SOME-THING'S APPEARING ON MY HAND...
SOME SORT OF...OF MARK?!
THIS IS BAD!
I'M GONNA WIND UP WITH THE DRAGON AT THIS RATE...

DARN IT!!
PUSH
GYAAAAAH!!!

AH-HHH-HHH--!!!
MMMMM
AH...!
I'M GIVING THIS TO YOU!!
THERE'S NO POINT IF YOU DON'T TAKE IT !!!
.....!!
SSSSH
SSSSH

Stop at once!
If you continue—
AHHH... AH!!
TWITCH
UNNH ...!
NO! I WON'T STOP!!
THIS... IS... YOURS ...!!!

!!
HUFF ...!
ポタ
DRIP
ポタ
DRIP
HUFF ...!
FAINT...
THUD...
TAKE ...
THAT ...
I... DID IT...
HEH... SEE?

Ash Blake...
What a foolish thing you've done.

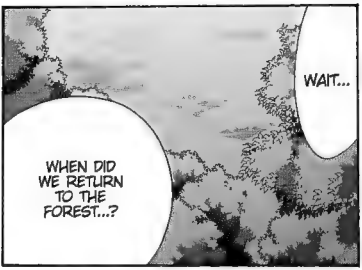
The star mark has been transferred to Sylvia Laufrea-mont.
What a powerful will he must possess to twist destiny itself...!
Flutter
But as a result...
His life is...
If I were to bestow a dragon upon him, his wounds would be healed.
But that little one was the last I had to grant.
Glow
He's quite something to force this decision upon me.
.....

I have no other choice.
If I bless you with the Orphan who is the scion of the Imperial Family of Avalon...
The original plan will be forced to change.
But I will choose to bank on your potential, boy.
FSSH

VWOOOOO
FWWSSH
HHSSSSS

Whether you will successfully ride this child one day...
Depends entirely on you.
I have no doubt you will have to endure much to reach that day.
But I choose to believe...
That the time will come.

NNGH
...
I...


WAIT...
WHEN DID WE RETURN TO THE FOREST...?

BUT IT'S STILL HERE, SO...WAS THAT A DREAM?
UNNNHH
...

MY ARM --!
I...I THOUGHT IT'D BEEN TORN RIGHT OFF!

YES...
WHY ARE WE BACK IN THE FOREST?
OH! ARE YOU OKAY?!
UNNNH...
I... I THINK I PASSED OUT...?
HAH!
I REMEMBER!
MY CHEST --!
BOLT UPRIGHT
H-HEY! WHAT'RE YOU DOING?! STOP THAT!
DON'T LOOK AWAY!
I WANT YOU TO SEE IT PROPERLY!

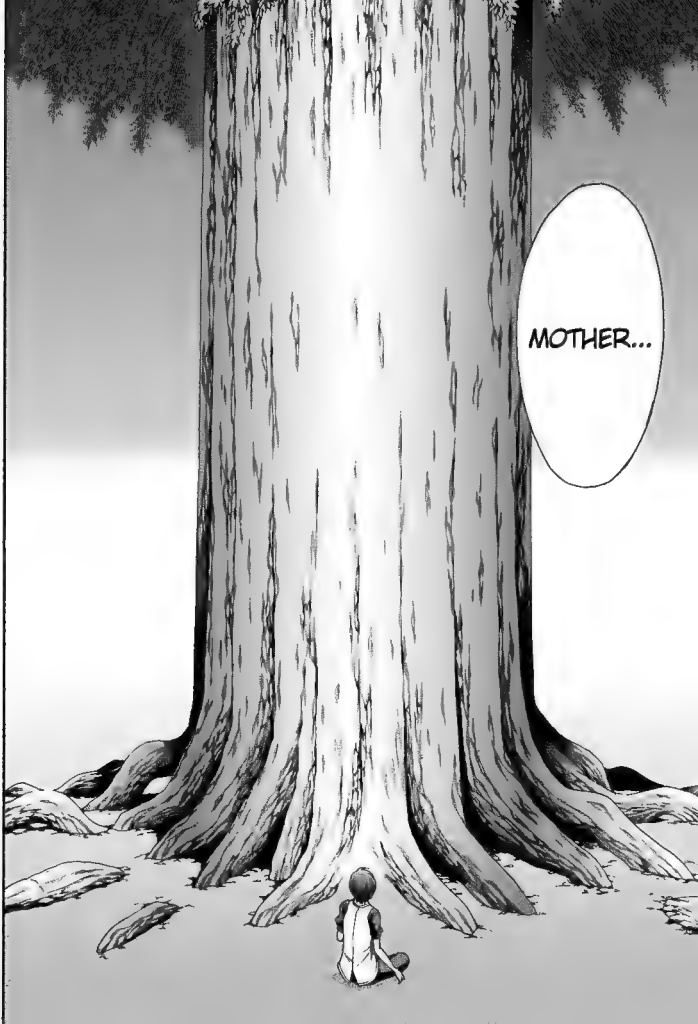
THE MARK OF A BREEDER! SO, IT WASN'T A DREAM!
THAT'S WHAT I SAW BACK THERE!
.....!
BUT... BUT YOU...!!
BUT... IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE YOURS, NOT MINE.
LUNGE
BUT EVEN IF I TRY FOR MY ENTIRE LIFE, I COULD NEVER, EVER REPAY YOU FOR THIS!!!
NO, NO, I AM! I'M SO HAPPY!
SO WHAT ...?
AREN'T YOU HAPPY?

LOOK, YOU CAN SEE I'M TOTALLY FINE, RIGHT?
ONE DAY...
I DON'T WANT YOU TO THINK OF IT LIKE A DEBT. BUT SOMEDAY...
I WANT YOU TO SHOW ME SOME-THING.
I WANT TO SEE YOU RIDING AN INCREDIBLE DRAGON LIKE THE ONE WE SAW TOGETHER!
.....!!
I CAN DO THAT.
I ENTREAT THEE...
TO ACCEPT MY MOST SOLEMN VOW.

I, SYLVIA LAUTREAMONT, ON THIS DAY...
DO SWEAR THAT THROUGH ALL TRIALS AND JOYS, I WILL ENDEAVOR WITH ALL MY BEING TO BECOME A GLORIOUS DRAGONAR.
PRIN... CESS...
AND THEN, I SHALL STAND BEFORE THEE AND SMILE, AS I DO NOW.
SYL... VIA...?

PRIN-
CESS
...!!
THAT'S RIGHT...! AFTER THAT, I COLLAPSED.
I HAD A TERRIBLE FEVER, AND WHEN I FINALLY WOKE UP, I'D LOST ALL MY MEMORIES OF WHAT HAPPENED DURING THE CEREMONY!
SO, I DID MEET THE PRINCESS!
THAT'S WHY I RECOGNIZED HER STUFFED ANIMAL!

I RE-MEMBER IT ALL NOW...!!
BUT WHY?!
AND... WHERE AM I ...?!
WHAT AN IN-CREDIBLE PLACE!
JINGLE...
IT'S THERE... RIGHT BEHIND ME.
THAT SOUND I HEARD AS A CHILD...
CALLING TO ME AGAIN.


MOTHER...

RUSTLE...

DRAGONAR
ACADEMY

MOTHER...
DRAGON ...?
WHOOOSH...

Chapter
XLIV
Aoki's Memories: Part 4

A MASSIVE TREE ...!
AND THERE'S NOTHING ELSE HERE.
MAYBE I WAS IMAGINING THINGS?
BUT I COULD'VE SWORN I FELT THE MOTHER DRAGON'S PRESENCE...
It's not your imagi-nation...
Ash Blake.
HUH?
I KNOW THAT VOICE ---!

You're right.
I am the Mother Dragon... and I am this ancient tree.

Lower your eyes to the base of the trunk.
!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?!
THIS TREE IS THE MOTHER? HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?!

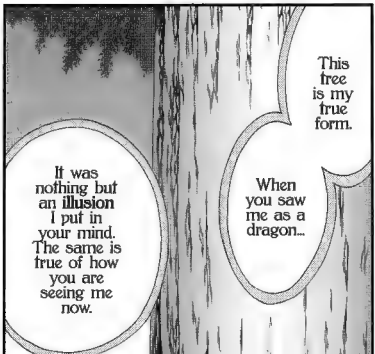
FLASH
We finally meet again...
Ash Blake.
It's time now...
For me to explain things to you.
YOU...
I SAW YOU IN MY DREAM!

When you became the Knight of Avalon...
I felt it was time at last for you to know the truth about yourself, so I decided to summon you.

SO THIS PLACE IS THE MIDDLE OF THE FOREST ...?!
You could say this is the forest's heart. yes.

I called out to your dreams...
And had you enter Albion Forest.

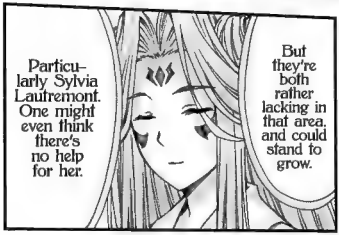
BUT... WHY WOULD A DRAGON BE A TREE?


This tree is my true form.
When you saw me as a dragon...
It was nothing but an illusion I put in your mind. The same is true of how you are seeing me now.

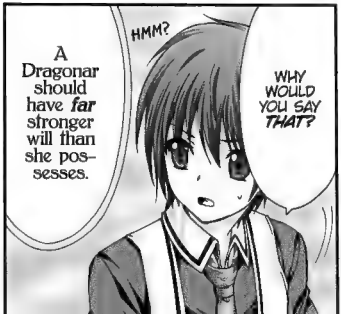
Guiding and shaping the dragon race's ecosystem requires a tremendous amount of Astral.
I evolved into this form in order to access the Astral I need directly through the earth. Until now, it's enabled me to give birth to all of the Orphans.

But even this form has its limits, and I have reached them.
I know you're aware that the Dragon Tribe is dying out.
And that's why, more than ever, we need that child—we need Eco.
!
ECO !!
PRIN-CESS !!!

ARE THEY ALL RIGHT?!
You needn't worry.
JOLT
AAAAGH!
UNNH...


Particularly Sylvia Lautremont. One might even think there's no help for her.
But they're both rather lacking in that area, and could stand to grow.

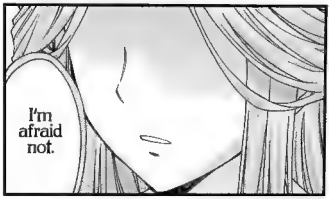
They entered the forest of their own volition.
SNAARL
I'm using illusions to test the strength of their wills...


HMM?
WHY WOULD YOU SAY THAT?
A Dragonar should have *far* stronger will than she possesses.

The timidity of her heart is why I did not choose her as a Breeder when you were children.
That decision was in part for her own good.
You are *intimately* aware of the outcome of my choice.
……
SO, WHAT I SAW IS WHAT REALLY HAPPENED BACK THEN, HUH?
Yes. I was greatly surprised.
Under the circumstances, my only recourse was to entrust Eco to you..
But you suffered such a **shock** from it all that you lost your memory.
I...
I STILL BELIEVE IT ALL WORKED OUT FOR THE BEST!
NO MATTER WHAT YOU THOUGHT OF THE PRINCESS, I HONESTLY BELIEVE SHE'S THE **ONLY** PARTNER FOR LANCELOT!
Mm. Perhaps.

PRIN-
CESS...

And there can be no doubt that her growth as a Dragonar allowed her to take such action.
Whatever happened in the past, she *did* seek to protect her dear friend Eco's life at great risk to herself.


I'm afraid not.

In truth, I hope to *never* meet her.
BUT WHY NOT ?!

LIM... WOULD YOU MIND WAKING ECO UP AND SPEAKING TO HER?
YOU'RE... YOU'RE HER MOTHER, AND I'M SURE SHE'D LOVE TO MEET YOU--

I am the mother of *all* dragons. Not even Eco can be given special favor or consideration.
That is my **fate**.
And my life will soon reach its end.
I want Eco to grow up carefree, rather than being held back by concern for me.
Eco represents the hope and despair of the Dragon Tribe...
And more, she is the ***future*** of our people.

WHAT IS IT ...?
The Bracelet of Avalon.

Ash Blake...
Take this with you.

No. While the empire's foolish-ness is to blame...
The fact remains that the child is still too young to control her power properly.

I know how Eco recently awakened in the capital city of Fontaine.
THAT... THAT WAS BECAUSE I WAS CARELESS.

TO BE HONEST, SOMETHING TRIVIAL ALMOST MADE HER AWAKEN AGAIN SINCE THEN.
Yes, I know that too.
But with the bracelet, she should be fine.

So long as she wears it, it will keep her power in check...
And *no* situation will force her into her dragon form.
What's more, as she becomes more accustomed to it, she will eventually be able to control the change on her own.
REALLY?
.....
THAT'S GREAT NEWS.
SHE'LL BE ABLE TO STOP WORRYING ABOUT IT.
AND... THERE'S ONE MORE THING I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU.
ECO'S BEEN WONDERING WHY SHE HAS A HUMAN SHAPE TO BEGIN WITH INSTEAD OF A DRAGON'S.

I... UM... I CAN'T HELP SEEING HER AS A HUMAN GIRL AS WELL AS A DRAGON...
AND... AND WHEN I LOOK AT HER...
Until now, we've survived by using the Astral generated by the **bonds** we form with humans.
But that has still not generated enough Astral to sustain them.
I believe I mentioned that she carries the **hopes** of our tribe on her shoulders?
.....
We decided to directly **fuse** our bloodline to that of someone who carries a tremendous amount of Astral within their body.
So, in order to preserve our race, we are taking a ***gamble***.

!!
ARE... ARE YOU SAYING ...?!
Yes. The hope is...
For off-spring ...
Between our two species.
That is why Eco was born.
!!
"I WANT YOUR BABY, ASH."
THAT'S... THAT'S ALL TRUE?
Yes.
That is why Eco's body was created to be almost precisely like a human female's.

THAT'S SO GREAT ...!
HA HA... I SEE.
SO... SHE REALLY CAN HAVE CHILDREN.
Now... I have conveyed to you all that is needed.
!!
FLOAT
I shall send you all outside the forest.
You care deeply for your Steed, don't you?
RAISE
It seems Eco has been truly blessed with a wonderful rider.

IF I WAS ORIGINALLY SUPPOSED TO BE LANCELOT'S MASTER...
OH! WAIT --!
DOES THAT MEAN YOU HAD SOMEONE IN MIND TO BECOME ECO'S RIDER AS WELL?!
WHOOOOSH
That is how it was supposed to be, yes.
The plan was for Eco to be born...
In the very near future...
To someone who, like you...
Bears the Chalice within their body.

WHOOSH

A CHALICE ...?
HAVE TO ADMIT I DON'T REALLY GET IT.

RUSTLE

WE'RE BACK OUTSIDE THE FOREST, HUH?
WE MADE IT--!
THERE WAS...
SO MUCH MORE I WANTED TO ASK THE MOTHER DRAGON.
OH, WELL.

THE REX ALBIONI FLOWER ...!!
!!
THEY'VE GOT...
SHE THREW ALL THOSE ILLUSIONS AT THEM...
BUT THEY GOT THE JOB DONE, DIDN'T THEY?
I GUESS...
RUSTLE
THAT MEANS WE CAN GO HOME!

BUT I LOST MY CHANCE TO PROMPTLY TELL THE PRINCESS ABOUT WHAT I'D REMEMBERED.
WE DECIDED TO STAY AT THE ABBEY'S INN FOR A FEW MORE DAYS...
KNOCK KNOCK
...!
LEAVING ME AND ECO BEHIND.
COSETTE APPEARED OUT OF NOWHERE, AND SHE AND SYLVIA HEADED OFF...
ECO?
LIM, ASH?
COULD WE TALK FOR A BIT? OUTSIDE?

I'VE BEEN WANTING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT HER.
I DIDN'T REALLY...
GET TO ASK YOU ABOUT MY MOTHER.
.....
SO, SHE DIDN'T WANT TO MEET ME...?
DOES... DOES THAT MEAN I'M A BAD CHILD...?

HERE, GIVE ME YOUR ARM.
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT?
NO!!
OF COURSE NOT! SHE WAS AS WORRIED ABOUT YOU AS SHE WOULD BE ABOUT ANY OF HER CHILDREN!!
THE MOTHER DRAGON WANTED ME TO GIVE IT TO YOU SO YOU COULD LEARN TO CONTROL YOUR TRANS-FORMATIONS! IT'S LIKE A CHARM!
AND IT DOESN'T JUST LOOK PRETTY!
IT'S SO BEAU-TIFUL!
IT'S THE COLOR OF STAR-LIGHT--!

SHE'S GOT SO MUCH TO DO, LOOKING AFTER YOUR RACE.
SHE DECIDED NOT TO MEET YOU SO YOU WOULDN'T WIND UP WORRYING ABOUT HER.
MOTHER...
I'LL... I'LL ALWAYS TREASURE THIS!
NO MATTER WHAT! I'LL KEEP IT FOR-EVER!
Y-YEAH.
AND, UH... THERE WAS ONE MORE THING.
?
?
WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU'RE BLUSHING LIKE CRAZY!
WELL, I... I ASKED HER ABOUT YOUR BODY, TOO.
M... MY BODY?

YOUR BODY IS, UM... IT'S JUST LIKE A HUMAN GIRL'S.
HUH? WH-WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I MEAN...
YOU CAN...
HAVE BABIES, JUST LIKE YOU WANTED!
LISTEN CLOSELY, OKAY?! I'M ONLY SAYING IT ONCE!
I KNOW YOU WERE DRUNK ON ANSAR, BUT I FELT LIKE YOU'D MENTIONED IT BEFORE, TOO, SO...
I'M JUST TELLING YOU IN CASE, OKAY?!

SINCE THEN, I'VE FELT THE BARRIER...
BETWEEN OUR SPECIES, SEPARATING US.
WHAT THAT MAID SAID TO ME...
HAS BEEN STUCK IN MY HEAD EVER SINCE.
BUT NOW...
I'M BACK --!
HUH?
I AM...
STOMP
FEELING TOTALLY LIKE MYSELF AGAIN!!!
UGH, BUT NOW I FEEL SO STUPID FOR BEING ALL DEPRESSED AND WISHY-WASHY FOR THIS LONG!
UH, ECO?
I WAS WAY BETTER WHEN...
I WAS BLUNT AND DIRECT ABOUT EVERYTHING!

YOU BET!
SO, ARE YOU FEELING BETTER NOW?
I FEEL REBORN!
AND I'M GONNA TRAIN MYSELF HARD!

BECAUSE I'D LIKE TO START RIGHT AWAY!
ARE YOU READY?
?!
ASH !!
WHAT'S WITH YOU TWO, HUH?! WHY'D YOU HAVE TO SHOW UP NOW?!
YOU'RE BACK ...?
PRIN-CESS?!
COSETTE ?!

PRIN-
CESS
...?
YOU...
WERE THE BOY I MET, WEREN'T YOU?!
!
!
HUH? DID YOUR MEMORIES COME BACK?
HOW --?
BUT I DIDN'T TALK TO YOU ABOUT IT YET!
BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU? HOW DID YOU FIND OUT?
YEAH, THANKS TO THE MOTHER DRAGON.

I'VE HAD COSETTE OFF LOOKING INTO THE ORPHAN CEREMONIES THAT HAPPENED THAT DAY.
FIFTEEN CHILDREN WENT INTO THE FOREST...
AND ONLY ONE OF THEM WAS A BOY.
AND THAT... WAS YOU...
ASH.
EVER SINCE, I'VE WANTED SO BADLY TO SEE HIM AGAIN.
AND NOW, I KNOW THE TRUTH... AND SINCE I FOUND OUT HERE AND NOW...
THE BOY WHO MADE MY DREAMS REALITY!
I'M NOT GOING TO HOLD BACK!!!

ASH BLAKE...
DART
I...I LOVE YOU !!!

WH...
WHA ...?

WH...
WHA ...?

STOP THAT RIGHT NOW!
YOU JUST...
JUST...
SERI-OUSLY, WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON?!
QUIT IT, I SAID!
I SWEAR I'LL TRAMPLE YOU BOTH--!!!

DRAGONAR
ACADEMY

AFTERWORD

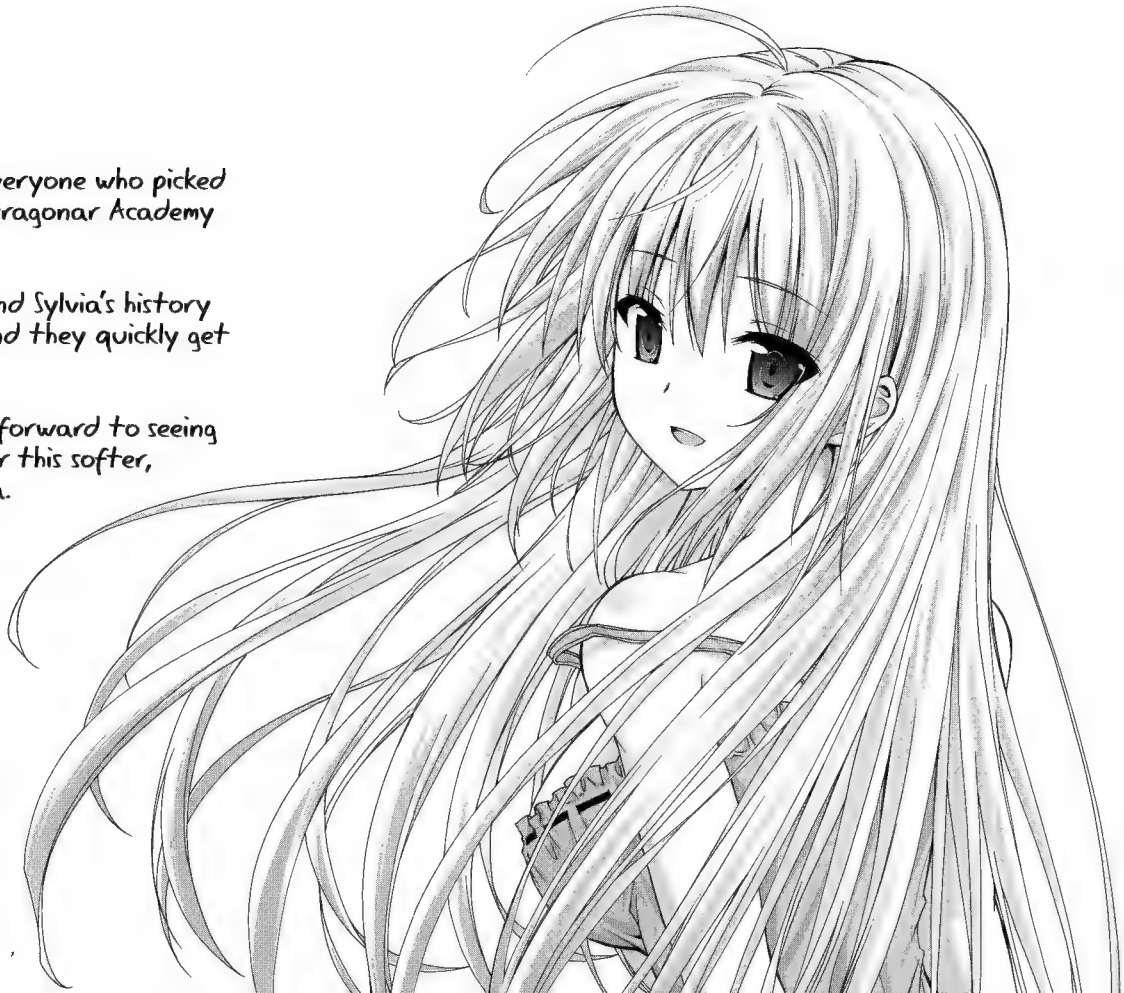
It's me, RAN.

Thanks so much to everyone who picked up volume 9 of the Dragonar Academy manga.

In this volume, Ash and Sylvia's history is finally revealed, and they quickly get even closer!

I hope you're looking forward to seeing how things unfold for this softer, more endearing Sylvia.

On that note, I'd be so happy to see you again in the next volume.



AFTERWORD

It's me, RAN.

Thanks so much to everyone who picked up volume 9 of the Dragonar Academy manga.

In this volume, Ash and Sylvia's history is finally revealed, and they quickly get even closer!

I hope you're looking forward to seeing how things unfold for this softer, more endearing Sylvia.

On that note, I'd be so happy to see you again in the next volume.

After regaining his childhood memories thanks to an audience with the Mother Dragon, Ash returns safely to school with his friends.
But soon after, a mysterious boy and Steed appear. The boy says the name of the second princess of Lautreamont, and has a challenge for Ansullivan Dragonar Academy...

Dragonar Academy Vol. 10
Coming Soon!
Meanwhile, Eco goes to see Navi at the Dragon's Workshop to try to improve herself, but she can't hide her annoyance at having a romantic rival to deal with.
And in the midst of all this upheaval, Ash suddenly has someone else to face...

Experience all that
SEVEN SEAS has to offer!

Visit us online and follow us on Twitter!

WWW.GOMANGA.COM

WWW.TWITTER.COM/GOMANGA

MOTHER KNOWS BEST

The Mother Dragon—a mysterious being even to the Dragonars to whom she bestows her offspring—has summoned Ash to Albion Forest. Ash obeys, accompanied by Eco and Sylvia, hoping to gain answers about Eco's true nature: Why does she have a human form? Will she be able to control her power? And how can Ash help her be happy again...?

But the truth about Eco isn't all that awaits the trio in the forest. It's time for Ash to learn what really happened to him and Sylvia in the forest so many years ago!

OLDER TEEN (16+)
$12.99 USA
($14.99 CAN)

Seven Seas Entertainment, LLC.
www.gomanga.com
Distributed by Macmillan